MARVEL

EDMONDSON
GERADS

016

FRANK CASTLE was once a decorated Marine officer, an upstanding citizen and family man. Then his family was violently taken from him when they were accidentally killed in a mob hit. From that day on, Frank Castle shed his old identity and became a force of cold, calculated retribution and vigilantism known as

THE PUNISHER

PREVIOUSLY

After being shot by the Howling Commandos, the Punisher escaped south of the border where he was captured by a drug lord, sold, escaped, voluntarily sent to prison, and escaped again. In the Punisher's absence the gangs have risen, led by the second Del Sol brother, plunging L.A. into chaos.

Captured by the Howling Commandos, Frank cast suspicion on the true nature of their orders. Team leader Sidewinder let Frank go on the condition he find the truth.

In Los Angeles, Officer Sammy Stone escapes prison amidst the riots and defends her city once again, through whatever means necessary.

MR. CASTLE GOES TO WASHINGTON

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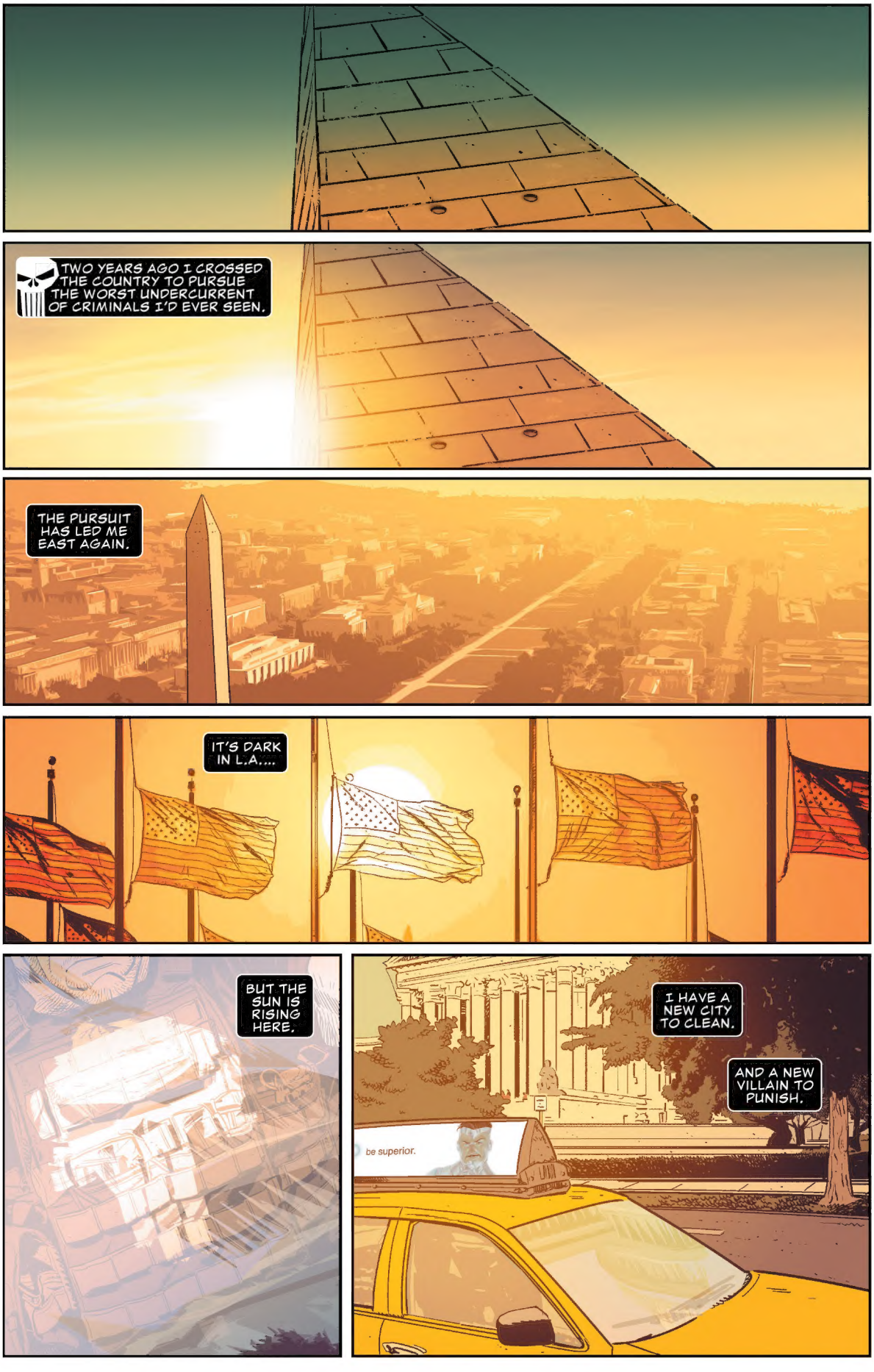
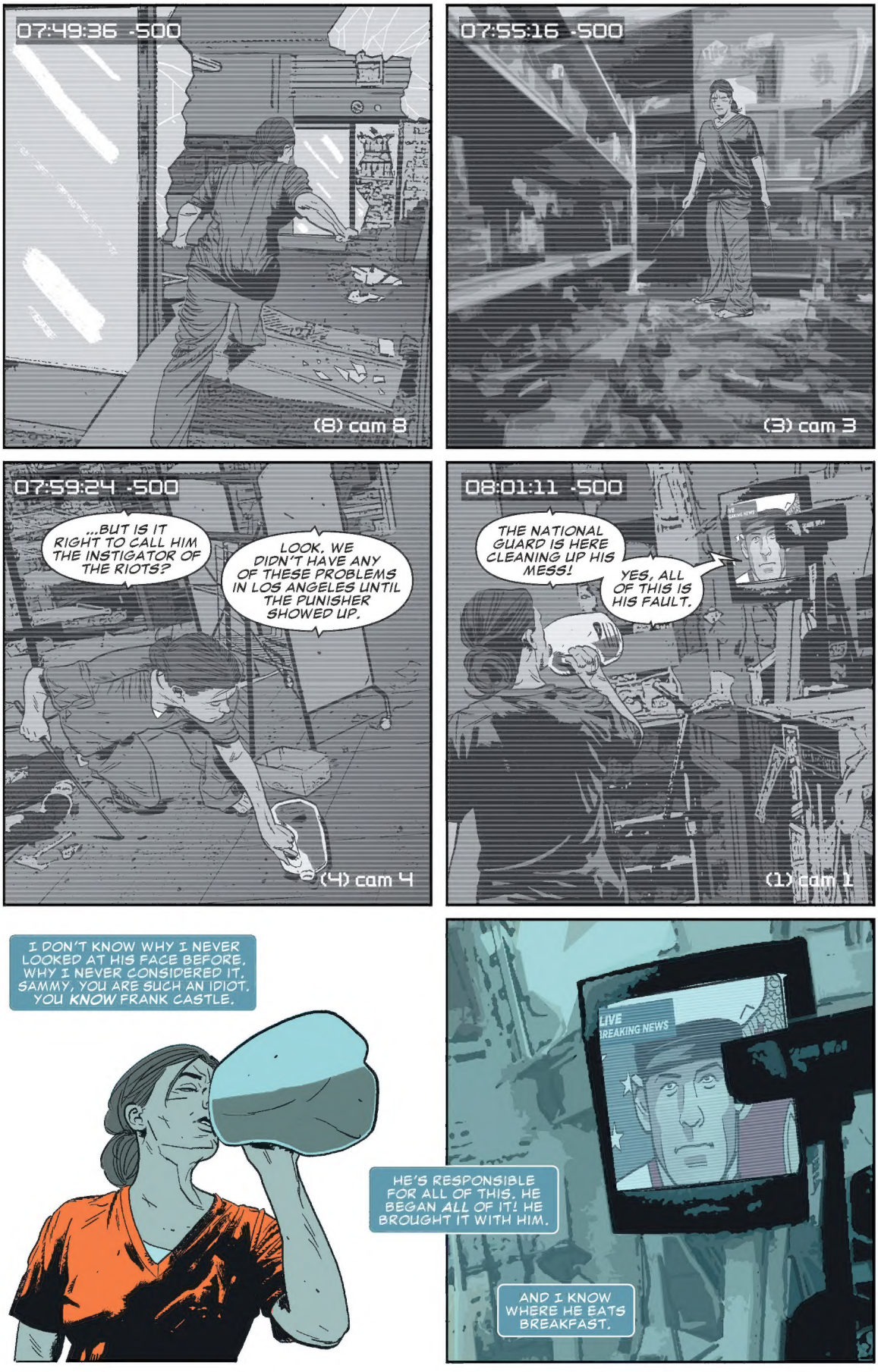

TWO YEARS AGO I CROSSED THE COUNTRY TO PURSUE THE WORST UNDERCURRENT OF CRIMINALS I'D EVER SEEN.
THE PURSUIT HAS LED ME EAST AGAIN.
IT'S DARK IN L.A....
BUT THE SUN IS RISING HERE.
I HAVE A NEW CITY TO CLEAN.
AND A NEW VILLAIN TO PUNISH.
be superior.

WHAT HAPPENED TO MY CITY?
THE CITY I BECAME A COP TO PROTECT. THE PEOPLE.
THE POLICE HAVE BEEN...
REPLACED.
ALL OF THIS... HORROR...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...BUT IS IT RIGHT TO CALL HIM THE INSTIGATOR OF THE RIOTS?
LOOK. WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY OF THESE PROBLEMS IN LOS ANGELES UNTIL THE PUNISHER SHOWED UP.
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THE NATIONAL GUARD IS HERE CLEANING UP HIS MESS!
YES, ALL OF THIS IS HIS FAULT.
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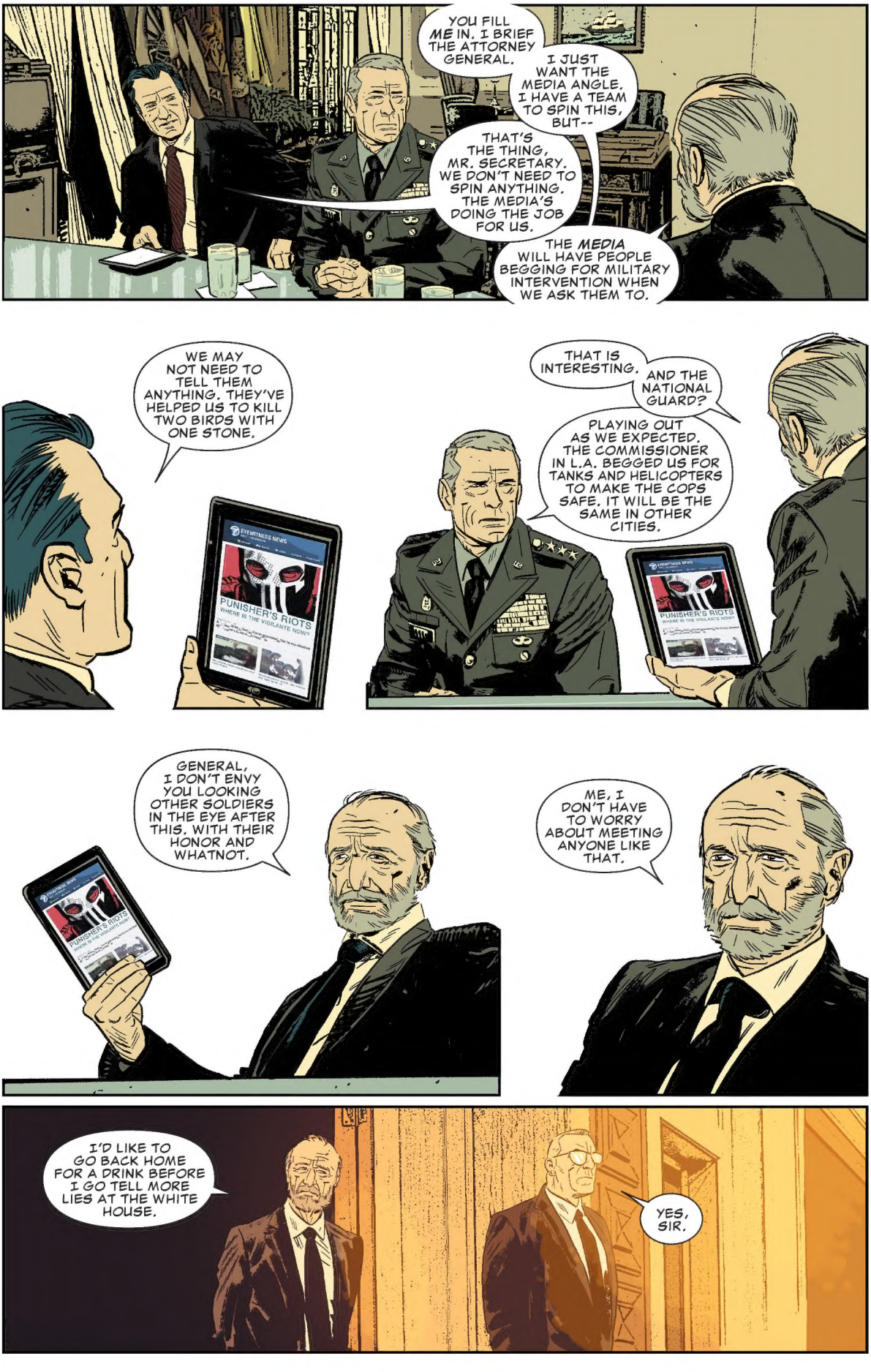
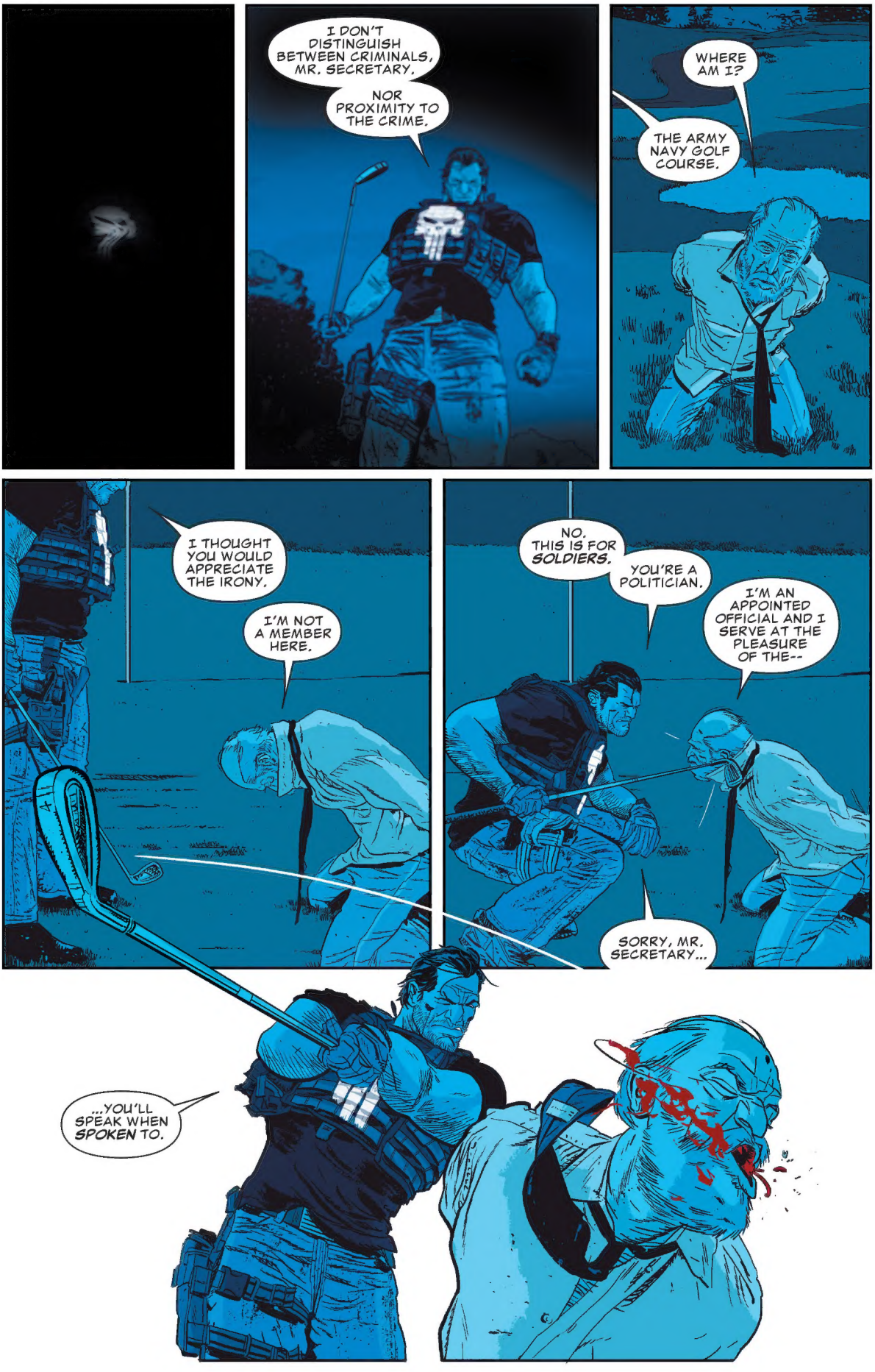
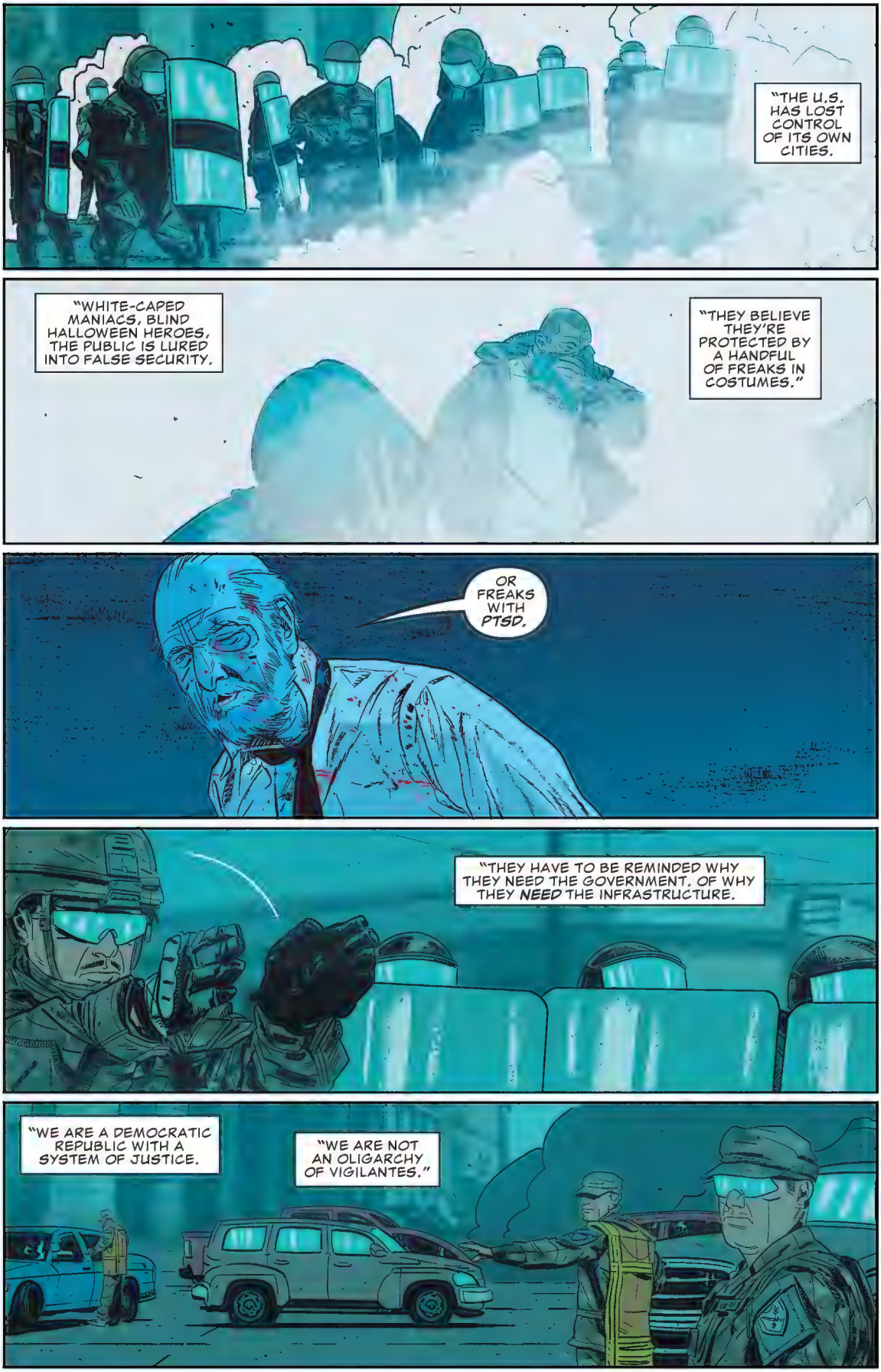
I DON'T KNOW WHY I NEVER LOOKED AT HIS FACE BEFORE. WHY I NEVER CONSIDERED IT. SAMMY, YOU ARE SUCH AN IDIOT. YOU KNOW FRANK CASTLE.
HE'S RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF THIS. HE BEGAN ALL OF IT! HE BROUGHT IT WITH HIM.
AND I KNOW WHERE HE EATS BREAKFAST.


YOU FILL ME IN. I BRIEF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.
I JUST WANT THE MEDIA ANGLE. I HAVE A TEAM TO SPIN THIS, BUT--
THAT'S THE THING, MR. SECRETARY. WE DON'T NEED TO SPIN ANYTHING. THE MEDIA'S DOING THE JOB FOR US.
THE MEDIA WILL HAVE PEOPLE BEGGING FOR MILITARY INTERVENTION WHEN WE ASK THEM TO.
WE MAY NOT NEED TO TELL THEM ANYTHING. THEY'VE HELPED US TO KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE.
EYEWITNESS NEWS
PUNISHER'S RIOTS
WHERE IS THE VIGILANTE NOW?
THAT IS INTERESTING.
AND THE NATIONAL GUARD?
PLAYING OUT AS WE EXPECTED. THE COMMISSIONER IN L.A. BEGGED US FOR TANKS AND HELICOPTERS TO MAKE THE COPS SAFE. IT WILL BE THE SAME IN OTHER CITIES.
GENERAL, I DON'T ENVY YOU LOOKING OTHER SOLDIERS IN THE EYE AFTER THIS. WITH THEIR HONOR AND WHATNOT.
ME, I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MEETING ANYONE LIKE THAT.
I'D LIKE TO GO BACK HOME FOR A DRINK BEFORE I GO TELL MORE LIES AT THE WHITE HOUSE.
YES, SIR.

CRASH
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON OUT THERE?
BUCKLE UP, MR. SECRETARY.


I DON'T DISTINGUISH BETWEEN CRIMINALS, MR. SECRETARY.
NOR PROXIMITY TO THE CRIME.
WHERE AM I?
THE ARMY NAVY GOLF COURSE.
I THOUGHT YOU WOULD APPRECIATE THE IRONY.
I'M NOT A MEMBER HERE.
NO. THIS IS FOR SOLDIERS.
YOU'RE A POLITICIAN.
I'M AN APPOINTED OFFICIAL AND I SERVE AT THE PLEASURE OF THE--
SORRY, MR. SECRETARY...
...YOU'LL SPEAK WHEN SPOKEN TO.

NOW EXPLAIN TO ME WHY YOU TASKED THE HOWLING COMMANDOS TO KILL ME.
WHILE YOU STILL HAVE TEETH.
I'M DEAD ALREADY, MR. SECRETARY. NOW...
AND THEY WILL, IT WON'T TAKE LONG. AND YOU? THE PUNISHER? THEY'LL SEND YOU TO A DEEP, DARK, WELL--
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY'LL DO TO YOU WHEN THEY FIND YOU.
LET'S START WITH THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS.
-GASP-
IT'S BIGGER THAN YOUR LITTLE *VENDETTA*, CASTLE.
AND IT'S ALREADY *DONE*.

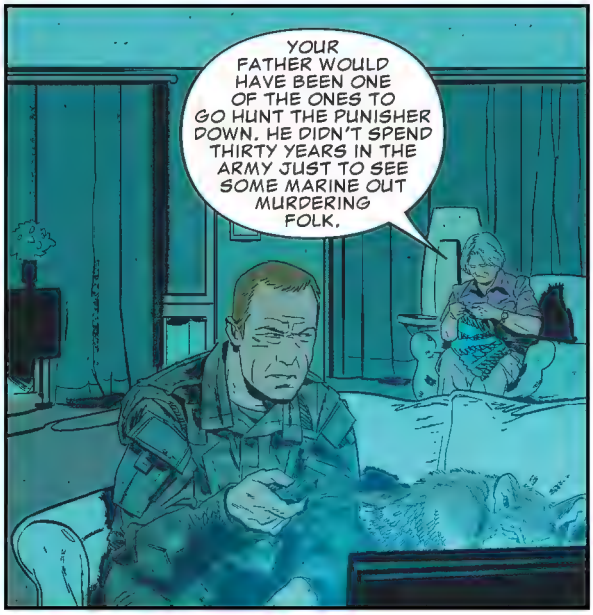

"THE U.S. HAS LOST CONTROL OF ITS OWN CITIES.
"WHITE-CAPED MANIACS, BLIND HALLOWEEN HEROES, THE PUBLIC IS LURED INTO FALSE SECURITY.
"THEY BELIEVE THEY'RE PROTECTED BY A HANDFUL OF FREAKS IN COSTUMES."
OR FREAKS WITH PTSD.
"THEY HAVE TO BE REMINDED WHY THEY NEED THE GOVERNMENT. OF WHY THEY NEED THE INFRASTRUCTURE.
"WE ARE A DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC WITH A SYSTEM OF JUSTICE.
"WE ARE NOT AN OLIGARCHY OF VIGILANTES."

WHAT ABOUT THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS? WHAT ABOUT MEXICO?
UNG- I THINK YOU KNOW, CASTLE.
THEY CAME FROM YOU.
GOOD LUCK PROVING IT.
WHY? WHY ARM THEM AGAINST THEIR OWN INNOCENT CITIZENS?
THAT WAS JUST HOW THEY TESTED THEM. THEY WANTED TO BE SURE WE HADN'T TRICKED THEM.
THE WEAPONS WERE MEANT FOR LOS ANGELES. OF COURSE, YOU STOPPED THAT PLAN.
FORTUNATELY, DEL SOL HAD A BROTHER TO FINISH THE JOB.
LIKE I SAID, MARINE. IT'S ALREADY DONE.
AND THE PUBLIC BELIEVES IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT.
SOME FORTUNE, EH? I SUPPOSE IT FAVORS THE BOLD.
LIKE I SAID, FRANK. THIS ONE'S BIGGER THAN YOU. AND DEAD OR NOT, KILLING ME WILL MAKE IT THAT MUCH BETTER FOR US.
WHO'S US? WHO ELSE IS BEHIND IT?
MORE THAN YOU CAN GET TO BEFORE A DRONE TAKES YOU OUT.

I'VE SEEN THAT LOOK BEFORE ON EVERY POLITICIAN WHO COMES TO THIS TOWN THINKING HE CAN CHANGE THINGS.
THIS IS GENERALLY WHEN I WOULD OFFER THEM SCOTCH.
RUN BACK, FRANK. TO WHEREVER YOU CAME FROM.
GO CHASE CARJACKERS AND DRUG DEALERS. LEAVE POLITICS TO THE PROS.
GOING TO END THE GAME OVER PAR, CASTLE?
MURDER IS AN UNJUST KILLING THAT SERVES NO END.
I'M NOT A MURDERER.
AND THIS ISN'T A FIGHT ANYMORE.

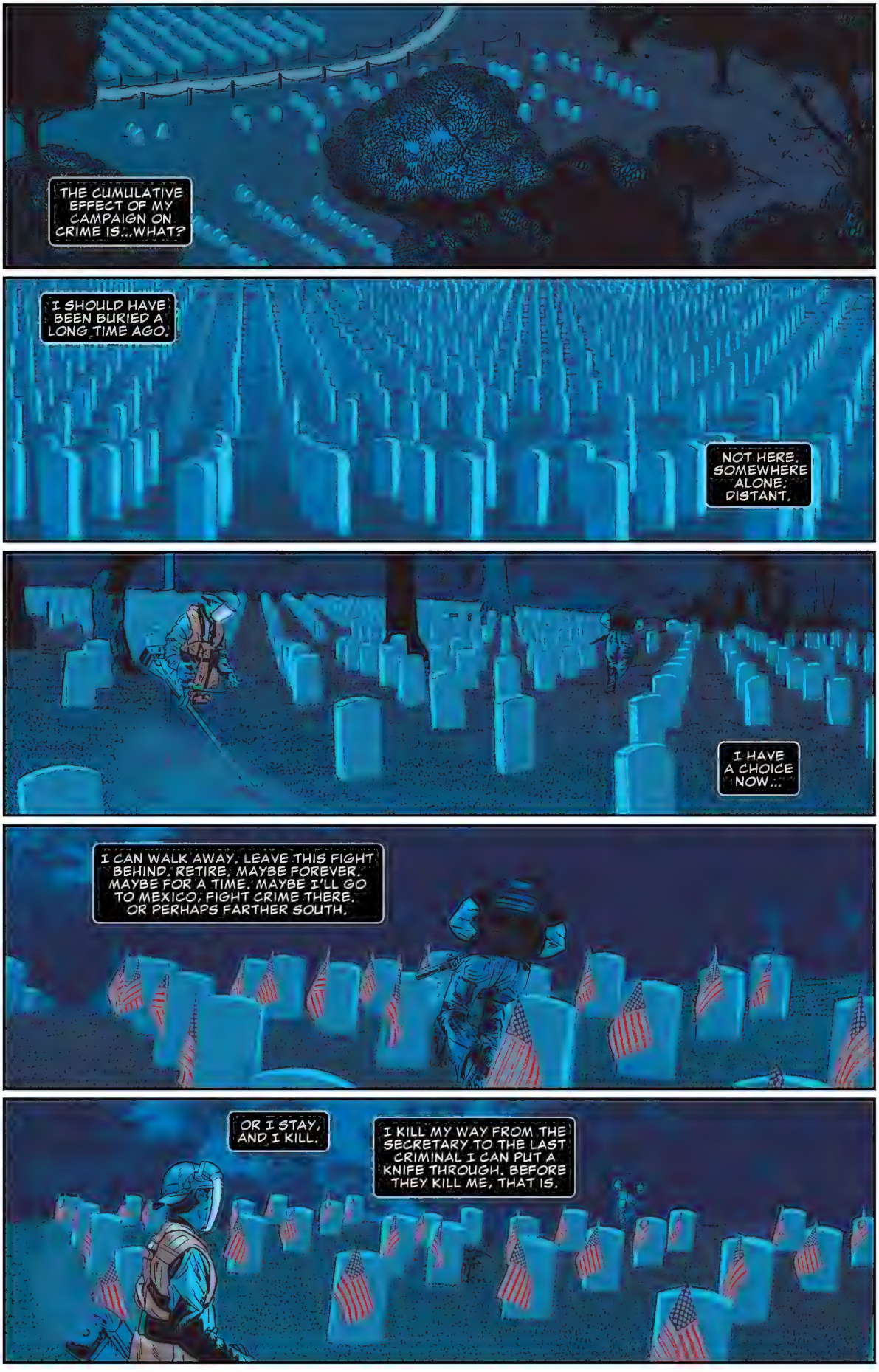
...WITH EVEN THE WHITE HOUSE REFERRING TO "FRANK CASTLE'S RIOTS," CALLS FOR THE VIGILANTE TO ANSWER FOR THE VIOLENCE...
...WAIT... WE'VE JUST HEARD FROM UNNAMED SOURCES WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION THAT FRANK CASTLE, A.K.A. THE PUNISHER, HAS IN FACT BEEN KILLED BY CROSSFIRE IN THE RIOTS...
LIVE
BREAKING NEWS
E CASTLE RIOTS CONTINUE MILITARY CONTINUES T

WELL, GOOD. PERHAPS NOW IT WILL WIND DOWN.
HE'S NOT DEAD, MOM.
HE LIKELY IS. AND IF NOT, THEY'LL ROUND HIM UP. CAN'T STAND UP TO THE MILITARY, NOW, CAN YOU?

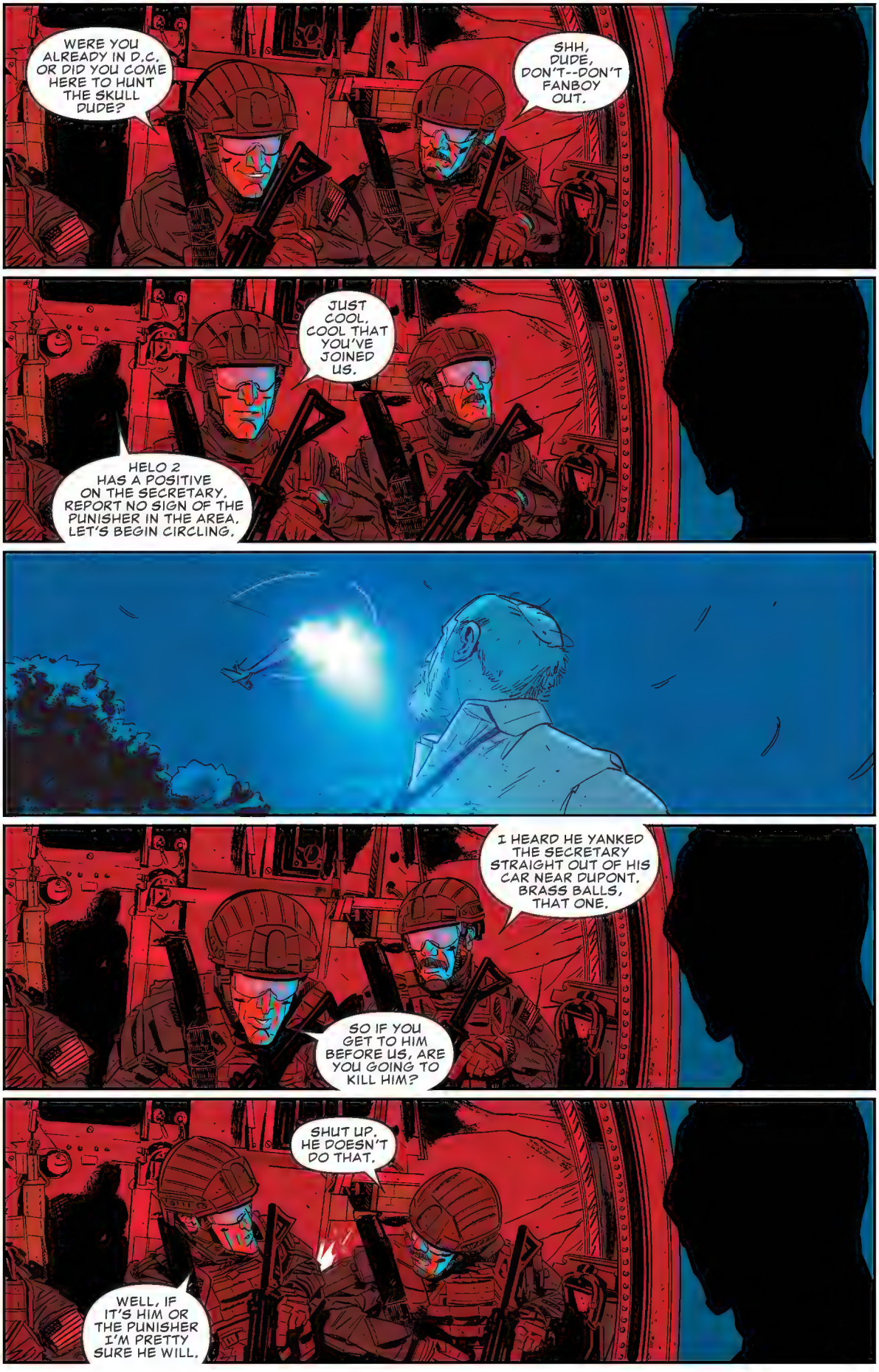

YOUR FATHER WOULD HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE ONES TO GO HUNT THE PUNISHER DOWN. HE DIDN'T SPEND THIRTY YEARS IN THE ARMY JUST TO SEE SOME MARINE OUT MURDERING FOLK.

THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MURDERING AND DOING WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO STOP THE--
GOOD RIDDANCE, I SAY. WE NEED MORE LAW AND ORDER, LESS HERO NONSENSE.

THAT'S JUST THE REASON YOU WEAR THE UNIFORM, THOMAS.

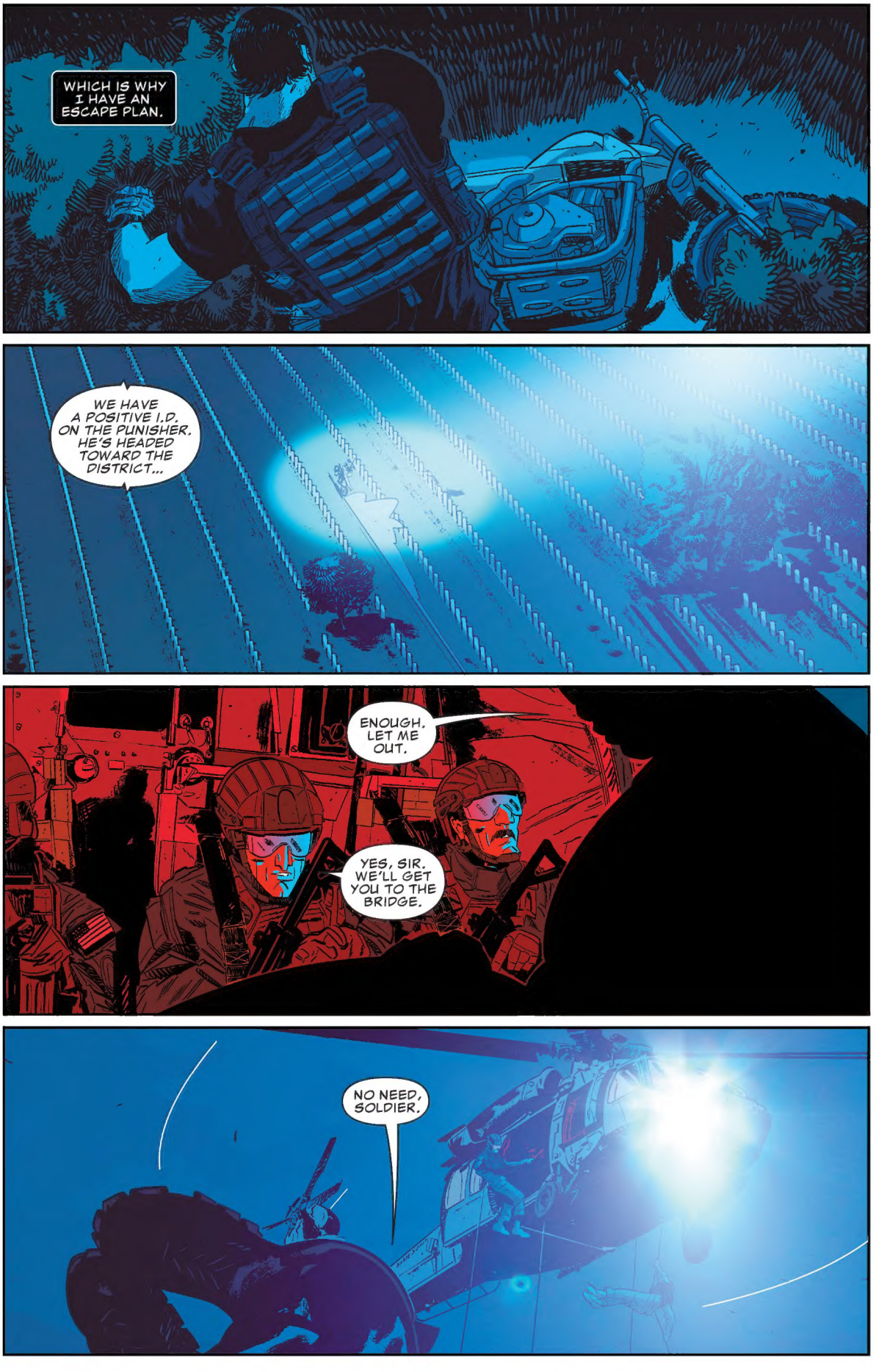

THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF MY CAMPAIGN ON CRIME IS...WHAT?
I SHOULD HAVE BEEN BURIED A LONG TIME AGO.
NOT HERE. SOMEWHERE ALONE. DISTANT.
I HAVE A CHOICE NOW...
I CAN WALK AWAY. LEAVE THIS FIGHT BEHIND. RETIRE. MAYBE FOREVER. MAYBE FOR A TIME. MAYBE I'LL GO TO MEXICO, FIGHT CRIME THERE. OR PERHAPS FARTHER SOUTH.
OR I STAY, AND I KILL.
I KILL MY WAY FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE LAST CRIMINAL I CAN PUT A KNIFE THROUGH. BEFORE THEY KILL ME, THAT IS.

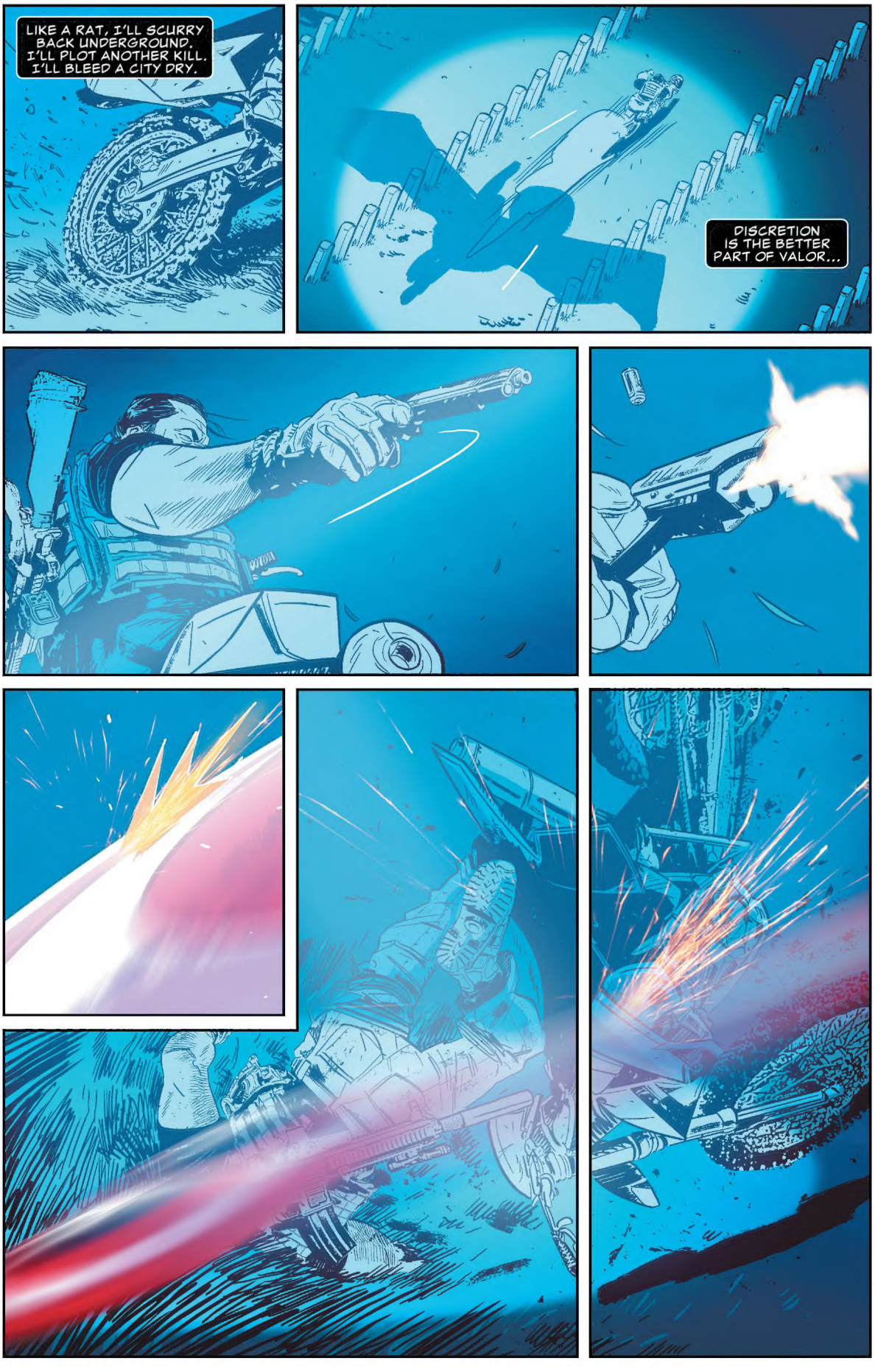
KILLING IS EASY.
KILLING IN A WAY THAT ISN'T JUST MURDER...
THAT ISN'T POINTLESS, THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE...
RIGHT NOW, IT MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE.


WERE YOU ALREADY IN D.C. OR DID YOU COME HERE TO HUNT THE SKULL DUDE?
SHH, DUDE, DON'T--DON'T FANBOY OUT.
JUST COOL, COOL THAT YOU'VE JOINED US.
HELO 2 HAS A POSITIVE ON THE SECRETARY. REPORT NO SIGN OF THE PUNISHER IN THE AREA. LET'S BEGIN CIRCLING.
I HEARD HE YANKED THE SECRETARY STRAIGHT OUT OF HIS CAR NEAR DUPONT. BRASS BALLS, THAT ONE.
SO IF YOU GET TO HIM BEFORE US, ARE YOU GOING TO KILL HIM?
SHUT UP. HE DOESN'T DO THAT.
WELL, IF IT'S HIM OR THE PUNISHER I'M PRETTY SURE HE WILL.

ARLINGTON P.D. SEARCHING BALLSTON, CLARENDON, FALLS CHURCH AREAS...
NO WAY HE MADE IT THAT FAR ON FOOT. AND WASHINGTON BOULEVARD, ARLINGTON BOULEVARD, THE INTERSTATE ARE ALL BLOCKED...
YOU SAW HE STARTED THOSE RIOTS IN L.A.?
RIOTS DON'T START 'CAUSE OF ONE MAN.
OH YEAH? WHAT ABOUT RODNEY KING?
COME ON, MAN.
"PLUS, WHAT'S HE DOING OUT HERE?
"IF HE STARTED A RIOT, HE COULD HAVE AT LEAST FINISHED IT.
"IF IT KEEPS UP WE'LL HAVE ONE OF OUR OWN, RIGHT HERE IN THE DISTRICT. THAT'LL BE A MESS."

ARLINGTON P.D. HAS A POSSIBLE SIGHTING AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETARY.
ON IT.
HOW MANY INNOCENT PEOPLE AM I WILLING TO SHOOT MY WAY THROUGH TO MAKE IT ALL RIGHT?
NONE.
THEY WON'T TREAT ME THE SAME WAY.
WHICH MAKES ME AN ENEMY OF THE GOOD GUYS.
IT MAKES ME THE ENEMY.
I CAN TAKE ON A CITY.
BUT NOT A NATION.


WHICH IS WHY I HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN.
WE HAVE A POSITIVE I.D. ON THE PUNISHER. HE'S HEADED TOWARD THE DISTRICT...
ENOUGH. LET ME OUT.
YES, SIR. WE'LL GET YOU TO THE BRIDGE.
NO NEED, SOLDIER.


LIKE A RAT, I'LL SCURRY BACK UNDERGROUND. I'LL PLOT ANOTHER KILL. I'LL BLEED A CITY DRY.
DISCRETION IS THE BETTER PART OF VALOR...

THIS MAY BE NO TIME FOR VALOR.

THE PUNISHER
PUNISHER VS. CAPTAIN AMERICA!
A CAPITAL THROWDOWN!
IN TWO WEEKS